

the other day I went down to Mississippi and was with Governor Barbour and Jim Barksdale—he was the founder of Netscape, a local business guy who has put together a group of distinguished citizenry to help plan what south Mississippi ought to look like. And we'll see what else emerges—comes from that idea in Louisiana.

But the idea is, once these groups get up and running, they're going to have to interface with the Federal Government. And so I'm considering how best to balance the need for local vision and Federal involvement.

Now, there's going to be a lot of Federal involvement because we're going to spend money—wisely, I might add. And so it's an idea that I'm still considering. And I want to watch—because the reason why I'm comfortable about saying “still considering” is because we're still recovering. And we've got a lot of work to do to recover. I mean, when I go down to Mississippi, I appreciate the vision that they're beginning to think about, but my first priority was to help those local folks remove debris. And then the next question is, what do we do with the debris once it's removed? And there's a lot of immediate needs.

If I were to go down to New Orleans today—I'm not—if I were, I'd be talking to the mayor; I'd be interested in the vision—but I'd be more interested in how we're going to get that water out of the 9th ward. And so I'm now interested—the next step of the recovery is how to get temporary housing in place, to get workers back so that jobs can get cranked up again.

In terms of Texas, when it comes to where my thought process is now, I'm interested in getting electricity to people and gasoline to people. But the vision element of reconstruction is just beginning, and there may be a need for an interface with a particular person to help make sure that the vision becomes reality. It's a long answer to a short question.

Thank you all. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:59 a.m. in the Emergency Operations Center at the U.S. Department of Energy. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi;

James L. Barksdale, chairman, Governor Barbour's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal; and Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA. A reporter referred to Minister of Energy and Oil Ahmad Fahd al-Ahmad Al Sabah of Kuwait.

Memorandum on Energy and Fuel Conservation by Federal Agencies

September 26, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Energy and Fuel Conservation by Federal Agencies

Residents of the Gulf Coast States affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have lost loved ones, lost homes, and been displaced from their communities. The Federal Government will continue to assist victims of the hurricanes. Our priority is first to save, sustain, and protect lives and then to restore important infrastructure needed for recovery.

A key component of this Administration's hurricane response plan is to ensure that sufficient supplies of natural gas, gasoline, and diesel fuel are available throughout the country, including in those areas hardest hit by the hurricane, as well as in those areas served by refineries and pipelines originating in the affected areas. Already we have made available oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to refineries that are short on supplies of crude oil, and we will continue to monitor this situation and the use of the SPR. The Department of Energy has deployed personnel and is working with local power companies, local authorities, and State authorities to help get electricity functioning and to ensure the repair and continuity of oil and gas pipelines that may have been affected by power outages. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency has issued temporary fuel waivers under the Clean Air Act, and the Department of Transportation has suspended “hours of service” rules for fuel tanker trucks to make additional supplies of gasoline and diesel fuel available in those

areas of the country affected by the hurricane. However, it is important that the Federal Government lead by example and further contribute to the relief effort by reducing its own fuel use during this difficult time.

Therefore, I hereby direct the heads of executive departments and agencies (agencies) to take appropriate actions to conserve natural gas, electricity, gasoline, and diesel fuel to the maximum extent consistent with the effective discharge of public responsibilities. All agencies should conserve fuel so we can reduce overall demand and allow extra supplies to be directed towards the hurricane relief effort. In particular, agencies should temporarily curtail non-essential travel and other activities that use gasoline or diesel fuel, and encourage employees to carpool, telecommute, and use public transportation to reduce fuel use. Federal agencies should also take action to conserve natural gas and electricity during periods of peak consumption by shifting energy-intensive activities to non-peak periods wherever possible and by procuring and using efficient Energy STAR-rated energy intensive appliances and products.

In addition, agencies should review their existing operating and administrative processes and conservation programs and identify and implement ways to reduce overall fuel use. Agencies should report to me, through the Secretary of Energy, within 30 days from the date of this memorandum on the fuel conservation actions taken. Agencies shall take these and other appropriate energy and fuel conservation actions using existing budget authority.

George W. Bush

Presidential Determination Relating to Assistance for Saudi Arabia

September 26, 2005

Presidential Determination No. 2005-38

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination Relating to Assistance for Saudi Arabia

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United

States, including section 575 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2005 (FY 2005 FOAA) (Div. D, Public Law 108-447), I hereby certify that Saudi Arabia is cooperating with efforts to combat international terrorism and that the proposed assistance will help facilitate that effort, and hereby waive the application of section 575 of the FY 2005 FOAA, as well as any provision of law that is the same or substantially the same as such provision, including subsequently enacted provisions.

You are directed to report this certification to the Congress and publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Remarks to Reporters in Beaumont, Texas

September 27, 2005

I just met with local county judges and mayors, along with the Governor. Obviously this area is hurt. The Governor knows that. I saw it firsthand, how it's hurt. We've got some priorities that we're in the process of working together to achieve. The first is food and water. The second is electricity and generators moving this way; there's a rational plan to distribute the generators. Thirdly, there's fuel. We fully understand that it's hard to maintain order if you don't have fuel for your cars and first-responders.

And I appreciate the planning that the Governor put into this. The State of Texas is—took precautions before the storm hit and is now responding. And our job is to work with the State. I have the top people here with me, the Coast Guard Admiral, who is in charge of the Federal response. I had the head of FEMA with me, and I had a three-star Army general here, all of them here to help make sure these people can get their lives back together.

Again, the Governor has got a plan to make sure people don't come back too early. He's listening to the local judges and the mayors. Obviously, we want people to come home as quickly as possible. We want them to be able to do so in an orderly way. And when